

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KUALA 04132 120105Z
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /006 W
-----076512 120616Z /21
R 120030Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4179
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KUALA LUMPUR 4132

BANGKOK PASS TO REF COORDINATOR; HONG KONG PASS TO INS DIDIR

E.O. 11652: /A
TAGS: SREF
SUBJ: PROPROCESSING/TRANSPORTATION DIFFICULTIES

1. POPULATION OF REFUGEE TRANSIENT CENTERS KUALA LUMPUR NOW OVER 400. CENTERS PLANNED INITIALLY FOR CAPACITY NOT TO EXCEED 300 PERSON. OVERCROWDING DUE TO NUMBER MEDICAL HOLDS IN AUSTRALIA AND U.S. PROGRAMS (100); INCREASED NUMBERS STAGED FOR CANADIAN AND FRENCH PROGRAMS MOVEMENT AND CURRENT N.W. AIRLINE STRIKE (71 U.S. BOUND REFUGEES ON HOLD).

2. AS AUSTRALIANS HACU BEGUN MOVEMENT EX MALAYSIA UNDER THEIR PROGRAM OF "1200 OUT BY JUNE", TRANSIENT CENTER ACCOMMODATIONS ARE BOUND TO BECOME EVEN MORE OVERCROWDED.

3. UNHCR REP SAMPATKUMAR HAS AUTHORIZED THE RED CRESCENT TO BUILD AN ADDITION FOR 200 PEOPLE ON ONE OF EXISTING TRANSIENT CENTER STRUCTURES. HE HAS ALSO GIVEN THE GO-AHEAD FOR RED CRESCENT TO FIND ANOTHER BUILDING, A THIRD TRANSIENT CENTER, FOR PERSONS IN ALL PROGRAMS ON ADMINISTRATIVE OR MEDICAL HOLD.

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4. REGARDING AIRLINE STRIKE, NORTHWEST INITIALLY FOUND ALTERNATIVE CARRIER FOR REFUGEE PAX THEY WERE COMMITTED TO CARRY. AS STRIKE DRAWS ON, HOWEVER, N.W.A. HAS GIVEN UP TRYING TO HELP ACCOMMODATE REFUGEES, PREVIOUSLY BOOKED ON N.W.A., BY INTERACTING WITH ALTERNATIVE CARRIERS. ICEM KUALA LUMPUR SEEMS EQUAL TO TASK OF FINDING ALTERNATIVE FOREIGN FLAG CARRIERS (JAL, UTA) AT APPROXIMATE REFUGEE FARE RATE. NORTHWEST STRIKE WILL NOT PREVENT MOVEMENT

OF REFUGEES TO U.S.

5. A FINAL OPERATIONAL DIFFICULTY CONCERNS MALAYSIAN RED CRESCENT SOCIETY (MRCS) CAPABILITIES. SOCIETY HAS RENDERED SUPERB SUPPORT TO BOAT REFUGEE CARE AND RESETTLEMENT SINCE 1975. IN THOSE YEARS, HOWEVER, VOLUNTEER INTEREST HAS DIMINISHED CONSIDERABLY AND ASSETS, PARTICULARLY VEHICLES, HAVE BEEN WORN OUT IN SUPPORT OF U.S. AND THIRD COUNTRY PROGRAMS. RESULTS ARE THAT PAID MRCS STAFF IN KUALA LUMPUR AND IN SOME OUTLYING CAMPS NOW WORK AS MANY AS 16 HOURS PER DAY. IN KUALA LUMPUR, ONLY ONE MVCE VEHICLE, OUT OF FOUR LARGE, HEAVY DUTY TRANSPORTS, IS NOW OPERATIONAL. REST ARE DEADLINED, NOT FROM LACK OF MAINTENANCE BUT MORE FROM OVERUSE.

6. UNHCR WILL BE APPROACHED AGAIN ON MATTERS CONCERNING MRCS WITH HOPE THAT UN CAN AUGMENT BUDGET FOR MRCS PAID STAFF AND, PERHAPS, PRESS RED CROSS SOCIETIES OF NORWAY AND JAPAN FOR VEHICLES WHICH THEY HAVE PLEDGED TO MRCS.
MILLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978KUALA04132
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780201-0838
Format: TEL
From: KUALA LUMPUR
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780565/aaaacddk.tel
Line Count: 81
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 74dc16a0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION HA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2709567
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROECESSING/TRANSPORTATION DIFFICULTIES
TAGS: SREF, MY
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/74dc16a0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014